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ABSTRACT

The purpose of teaching vocational ethics is to provide students with the opportunity to develop an enabling work ethic. An enabling work ethic is an integrated system of attitudes, values, and beliefs that empower a worker to resolve ethical conflict within self and between and among self and others or situations so as to promote individual job satisfaction and continuous and productive employment over time. Basic ethical principles may be taught via one or more strategies, including the overt-inductive approach, the overt-deductive approach, and the indirect method. Ethical reasoning is contingent upon the development of such cognitive skills as the ability to (1) identify and understand relationships between and among people, events, objects, and ideas; (2) discriminate between fact and opinion, the real and the fanciful; (3) recognize issues, problems, and ambiguity; (4) develop and test hypotheses and generalizations; (5) judge the relevance and importance of information; (6) analyze a given data set; and (7) determine and judge alternate actions. Ethical reasoning and behavior are mediated by interpersonal competencies that enable an individual to translate ethical reasoning into ethical conduct within the work context. These competencies include assertiveness skills, empathic listening skills, negotiation skills, and risk-taking skills. (YLB)

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FINAL PROJECT REPORT
VOCATIONAL ETHICS INFUSION PROJECT
JUNE 30, 1986

1. Funding Agreement No.: R-2B-26-X-4.2-522

2. Project Title: Vocational Ethics Infusion Project

3. Project Director: Pamela F. Miller

4. Funded Agency: Norris City-Omaha-Enfield Community Unit 3

5. Time Period: July 9, 1985-June 30, 1986

6. Cost of Project: $44,578.00

7. Activities:
   - Hired research assistant
   - Analyzed and reported results of survey of Illinois educators
   - Refined and expanded upon model of the development of an enabling work ethic
   - Identified three vocational ethics teaching approaches
   - Collaborated with Change Skills project Personnel to identify interface of VEIP and Change Skills models
   - Reviewed and identifed materials relevant to the teaching of vocational ethics
   - Submitted article on VEIP for publication

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8. Concerns: Development and publication of project materials

9. Dissemination: Article for professional journal in press

10. Impact: Update unwarranted at this time

11. Meetings: Discussions held with Change Skills personnel, project consultant and Project Officer throughout project year.

13. Activities Planned:

Development of a manual of suggested strategies for teaching vocational ethics at the K through postsecondary level in Illinois.

Establishment of an "action" committee to promote the infusion of vocational ethics in Illinois schools.

Distribution and field testing of the VEIP manual by Master teachers in Illinois schools

CE015116

Provide technical assistance to Master teachers testing VEIP strategies

Survey master teachers to determine efficacy of VEIP strategies

Revise manual as indicated by survey results

Work with DAVTE consultants to infuse VEIP objectives and strategies in orientation level vocational programs in Illinois

Overview of Vocational Ethics

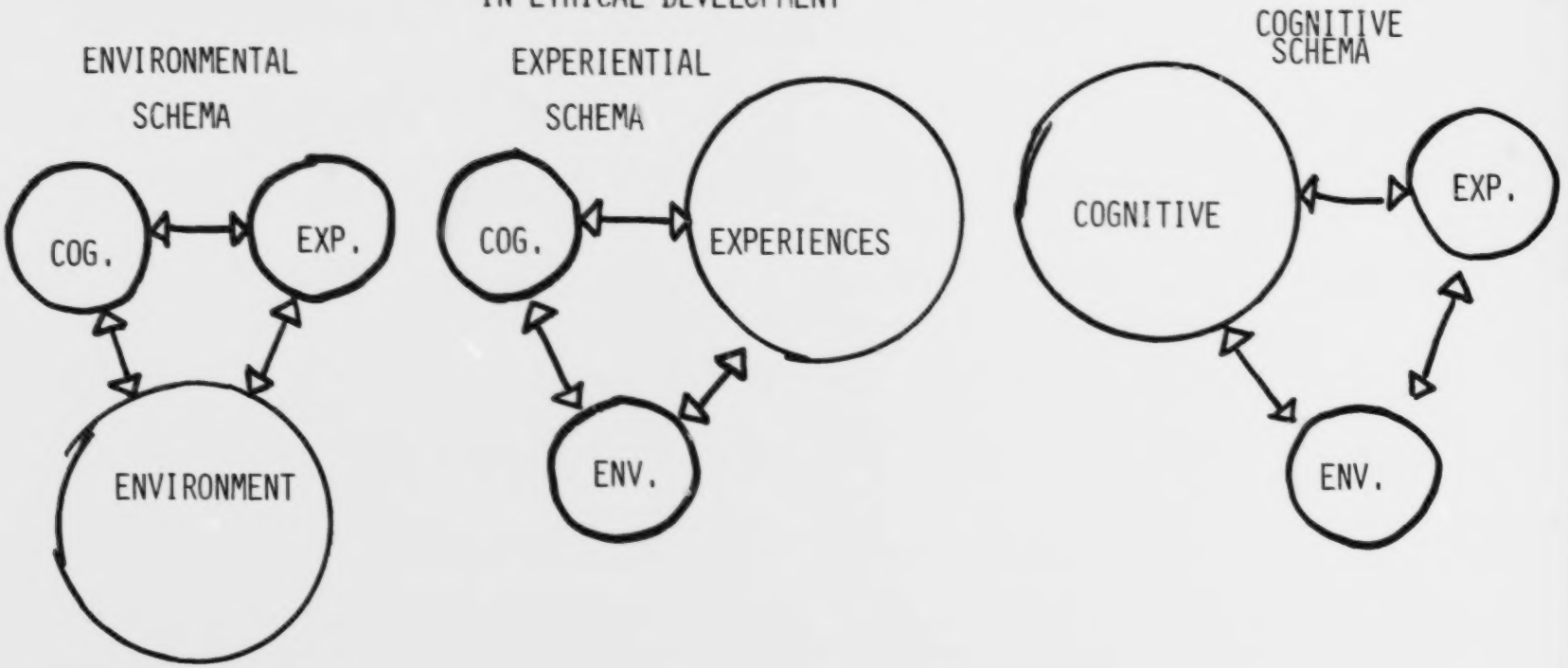
The purpose of teaching vocational ethics is to provide students with the opportunity to develop an enabling work ethic. An enabling work ethic is not a set of items of information to be memorized or skills to be mastered. An enabling work ethic is an integrated system of attitudes, values and beliefs that empower an individual worker to resolve ethical conflict within self and between and among self and others or situation in such a way as to promote individual job satisfaction and continuous and productive employment over time.

The development of an enabling work ethic proceeds in stages (see Figure 1). In Stage 1 of an individual's development, the environment assumes a dominant position relative to an individual's approach to ethical conduct. The individual's conduct, in such situations, is determined by the active, external enforcement of rules and regulations developed by others. These rules and regulations have no meaning or value to the individual beyond the consequences (reward or punishment) of obeying or violating established norms.

For example, a very young child or developmentally delayed adult has no internal mechanism for experiencing ethical conflict because they simply react to environmental contingencies. When contingencies are consistently applied, the child, for example, learns what type of behavior is expected in a given situation. As the child grows, behavioral patterns or schemas develop from this process and the child moves into Stage 2. The developmentally delayed individual who never progresses beyond Stage 1 will require ongoing supervision of others to learn and maintain job skills.

In Stage 2, the individual's conduct is guided by the norms established by

VARIATIONS IN COGNITIVE, EXPERIENTIAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS
IN ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT



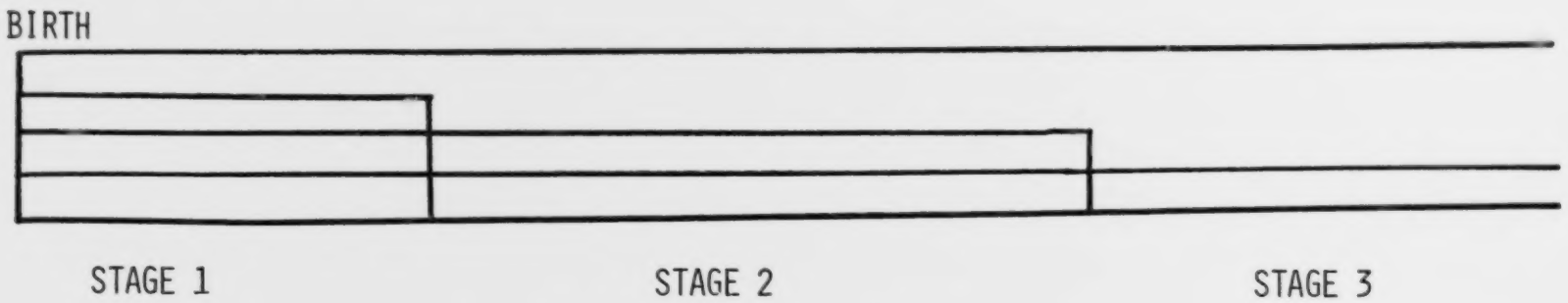


FIGURE 1.

outside authority which have, over time, been incorporated into the individual's response repertoire. The individual responds to ethical conflict by initiating a review of past experiences to identify previously learned rules and regulations of conduct that would be adaptive in the present conflict situation. Previously learned responses proven to be adaptive in most conflict situations over time are established as one of a variety of primary response patterns in the individual's behavioral repertoire. Thus the individual, at this stage of development, may either respond by conforming passively to the rules and regulations imposed by authority, behave in accordance with informal norms or by responding according to "habit" to ethical conflict in the workplace.

Most individuals, deal with day to day job requirements at the Stage 2 level, i.e., by habit. This is very adaptive and something employers rely upon and expect of workers. No company or business has the time or manpower to control all phases of the work environment including work behavior. Workers are expected to possess desirable work "habits" prior to employment. For example, when a worker at Stage 2 is first asked to participate in a flex time program at work, they may continue to adhere to previous work hours, they may follow the hours informally established by their fellow workers or adapt the work habits they have learned to use in other environments, e.g., home.

In the third stage of development, the individual attaches meaning and value to previously acquired rules and regulations of conduct by deducing underlying ethical principles from such norms of behavior. Stage 3 individuals have the capacity to experience a qualitatively different form of ethical conflict within self or between self and environment. Since Stage 3 individuals have a

greater awareness of underlying ethical principles they have have a greater opportunity to perceive competition between and among these principles in every day life. When conflict is experienced by Stage 3 workers, they are free to choose to act in accordance with rules and regulations imposed by others (Stage 1); to respond with a previously learned pattern of behavior proven adaptive in similar situations over time, i.e., habit (Stage 2); or by developing a new pattern of responding based upon their understanding of the principles of ethical conduct in the workplace (Stage 3). In the case of a Stage 3 worker faced with the flex time problem, the worker is capable of developing a working schedule that effectively incorporates competing personal and job demands.

Individuals functioning in the third stage of development thus have the greatest number of response options. These individuals can be flexible in their response to environmental demands and thus their ability to remain continuously and productively employed is greatly enhanced. Thus, the teaching of vocational ethics is best construed as educating for and toward the development of an enabling work ethic.

The specific goals of vocational ethics instruction are:

1. To facilitate the affirmation of basic or pivotal ethical principles and promote the application of these principles within the work context.

2. To promote the use of ethical reasoning skills to resolve conflict between and among competing ethical principles within self and between and among self and others on the job.

3. To facilitiate the development of interpersonal skills critical to the mediation of ethical reasoning and behavior within the work context.

Basic Ethical Principles

Basic ethical principles may be taught via one or more of the following:

I. Overt-Inductive Approach (see Figure 2): The strategy of this form of instruction is to bring each student's values, beliefs and attitudes about worker rights and responsibilities to consciousness, to provide each student with the opportunity to alter or affirm their personnel work ethic and to learn how to resolve ethical conflict within self and between and among self and others or situation. This is accomplished by pressing the student to make a choice relative to a particular ethical problem or issue, controversial question, area of debate or policy affecting the world of work and to justify that choice through a process of ethical reasoning and conflict resolution. Areas of conflict appropriate for discussion are listed in Table 1. The specific scenario presented to the student may be based upon a real life problem involving one of these areas of conflict or a creative fabrication. As students become familiar with the overt-inductive instructional approach, they may contribute a personal ethical question for discussion.

Ethical reasoning and conflict resolution entails first bringing the student's work attitudes, values and beliefs into critical consciousness. This is accomplished by encouraging students to use the skills of formal logic to justify their choice or stance relative to criteria such as: consistency, reciprocity, coherence, comprehensiveness, adequacy, duration, authenticity and openness. When conflict develops as the result of the discussion, either within one individual or between and among several students as the result of competing ethical principles, an opportunity is presented to encourage the

OVERT
INDUCTIVE
APPROACH

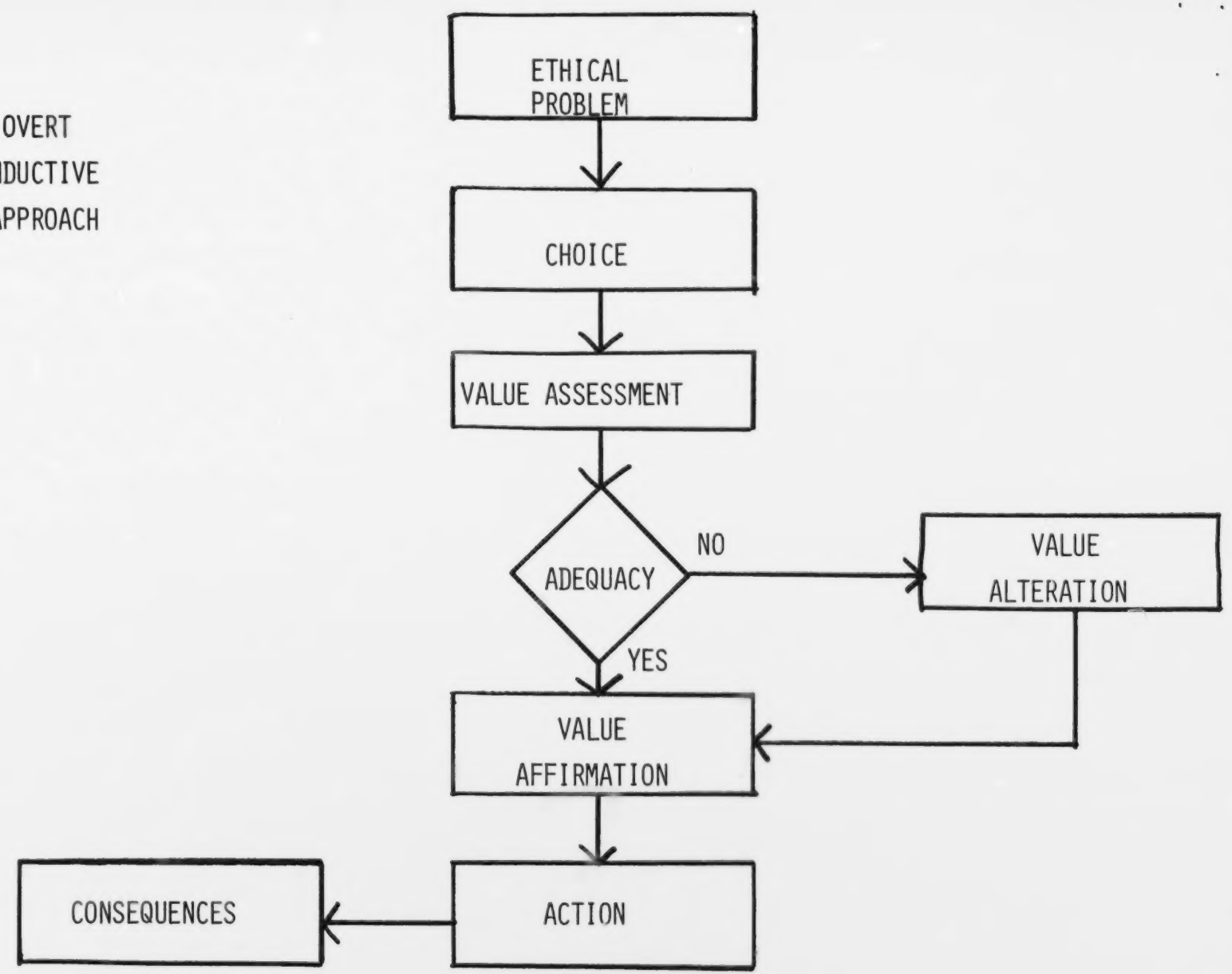


FIGURE 2

Table 1

1. Doing for oneself vs. doing for others
2. Loyalty to friends vs. violating one's standards
3. Allegiance to group vs. allegiance to personal standards
4. Obeying authority vs. adhering to personal standards
5. Coming to someone's aid vs. one's own safety
6. Giving immediate aid that might do harm in the long run vs. letting someone suffer now for long term benefit
7. Exposing wrong-doing vs. minding one's own business
8. Advancing one's own interests vs. one's own standards

development of empathic listening, negotiation, assertiveness and risktaking skills. The awareness of the relative adequacy of their position leads students to clarify their values and either alter or affirm their existing work ethic. The future actions of students and the consequences of such actions flow from values "taught" via this process. The goal of the overt-inductive approach is to develop an enabling system of worker beliefs, attitudes and values based upon the underlying standards and norms that orient human choices toward satisfaction and fulfillment, i.e., freedom, equality, respect and tolerance for self and others. Specifically, this approach promotes: knowledge of facts and active caring involvement in the ethical problems and issues of the world of work; the ability to project alternatives and to weigh the consequences of one's behavior; disclosure and assessment and the successful resolution of competing values, beliefs and attitudes within self and between and among self and others as well as the responsibility for making and acting upon personal decisions.

II. Overt-Deductive Approach (see Figure 3): This approach focuses directly upon the basic values of freedom, equality, respect and tolerance as a framework for discussing specific ethical problems related to broad vocational issues and occupational topics. This approach encourages inquiry into the role of such basic values in shaping personal and social experience. Student awareness of the consequences of these values on human well being leads to the affirmation of these values and ultimately influences student conduct.

This approach begins by disclosing the basic values to students and then allowing students to assess and then reject or affirm such values relative to concrete examples of the human experience presented in a specific instructional

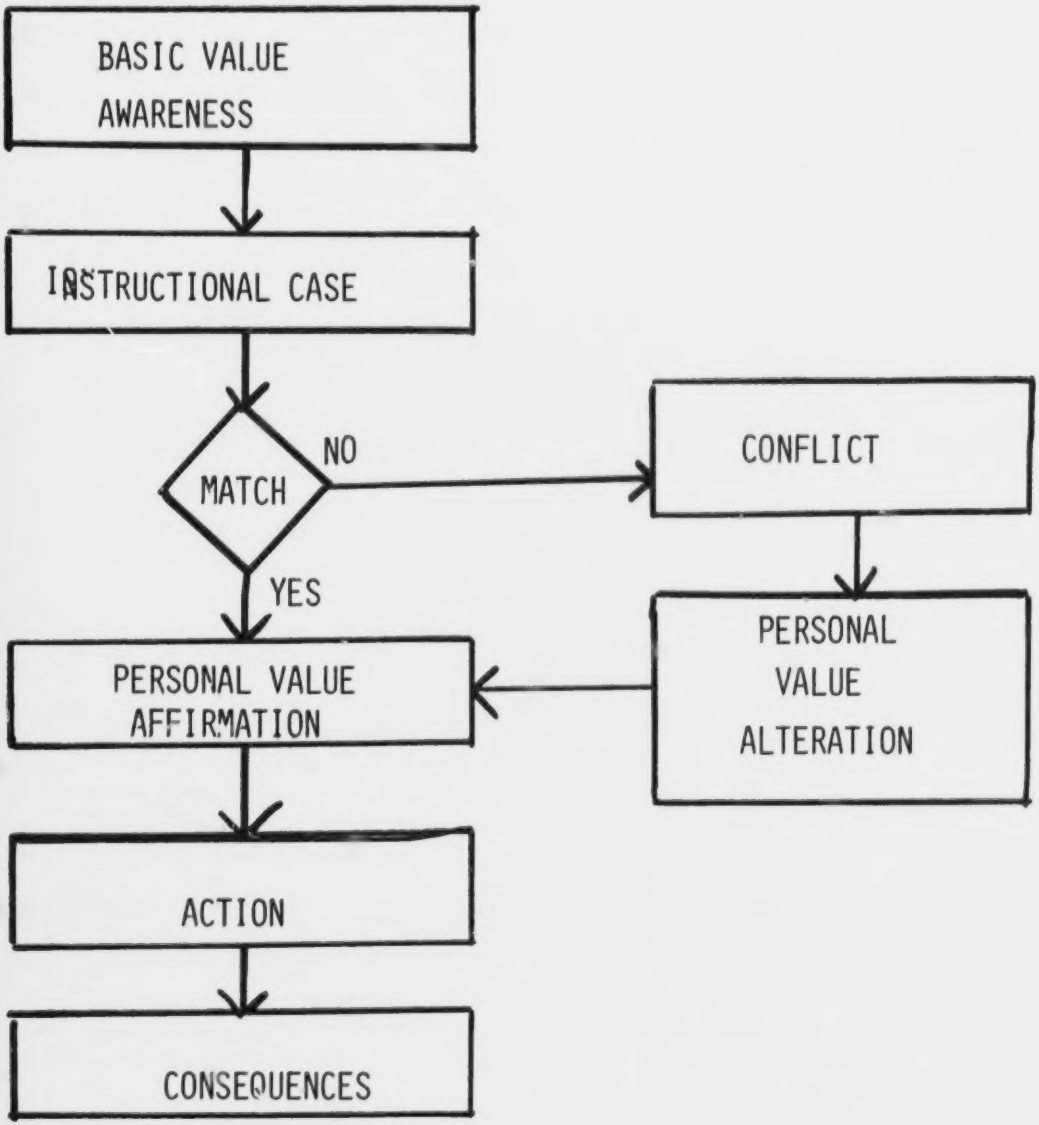

BASIC VALUE AWARENESS
INSTRUCTIONAL CASE
MATCH
NO
CONFLICT
YES
PERSONAL VALUE ALTERATION
PERSONAL VALUE AFFIRMATION
ACTION
CONSEQUENCES

FIGURE 3

case. Students passively acquire logical thinking, empathic listening, negotiation, risktaking and assretiveness skills by discussing and studying the ethical reasoning and conflict resolution process employed by key individuals in the case presented. Basic human values that are affirmed by this process become part of the student's developing work ethic and by extention influence the student's actions and prompt the consequences of such actions within the world of work.

The basic differences between the inductive and deductive approach to teaching vocational ethics is that in the deductive model, basic or pivotal values are disclosed to the students prior to the discussion process. When using the inductive approach, students are expected to infer an understanding of these same basic values as a result of the discussion process. Another difference between the two approaches is that the inductive teaching model focuses upon specific questions related to ethical conflict of a specific individual or group of individuals in a given situation which may or may not be reality based. The deductive model relys upon concrete examples of human history to illustrate the benefit of basic values under discussion. Students learning under the inductive model affirm or reject their own personal set of beliefs, attitudes and values. Students taught using the deductive approach affirm or reject the basic values in relationship to the evidence provided by human history and experience. The effect of this process on the students' personal attitudes, values and beliefs is assumed.

In addition, students, in the inductive mode, learn ethical reasoning and conflict resolution skills by using these skills to justify their own values, beliefs and attitudes. Under the deductive model, students learn these same

skills by illustration of the application of the ethical reasoning and conflict resolution process by others.

III. Indirect Method (see Figure 4): This approach relys upon the indirect transmission of an enabling work ethic to students via the informal contact between and among students and school authority figures within the school environment. "Instruction" occurs when the student experiences ethical conflict within self or between self and school authority and/or other students within this context. The indirect instructional process is thus a process of ongoing ethical conflict resolution within a real life setting. The process is illustrated in Figure 4.

Faced with an ethical conflict within self (S) or between self and school authority and/or other students in the school environment (E), students at Stage 1 will experience conflict when the rules and regulations developed by others are in disagreement or the rewards and/or punishments for obeying or violating established norms are inconsistently applied within the context in which they function. Conflict resolution for a student at this stage of development is a totally outer directed process. In short, outside authority must adjust the environmental contingencies for the student for conflict to be resolved. Students at Stage 2 will experience conflict when habitual responses no longer are adaptive. Students at this stage will first respond by reviewing all response options learned via prior experience, either actual or vicarious. If the student identifies a match, i.e., a previously learned response that solved a similar conflict or problem in the past, they will attempt to act in a similar manner in order to restore harmony or equilibrium within self or

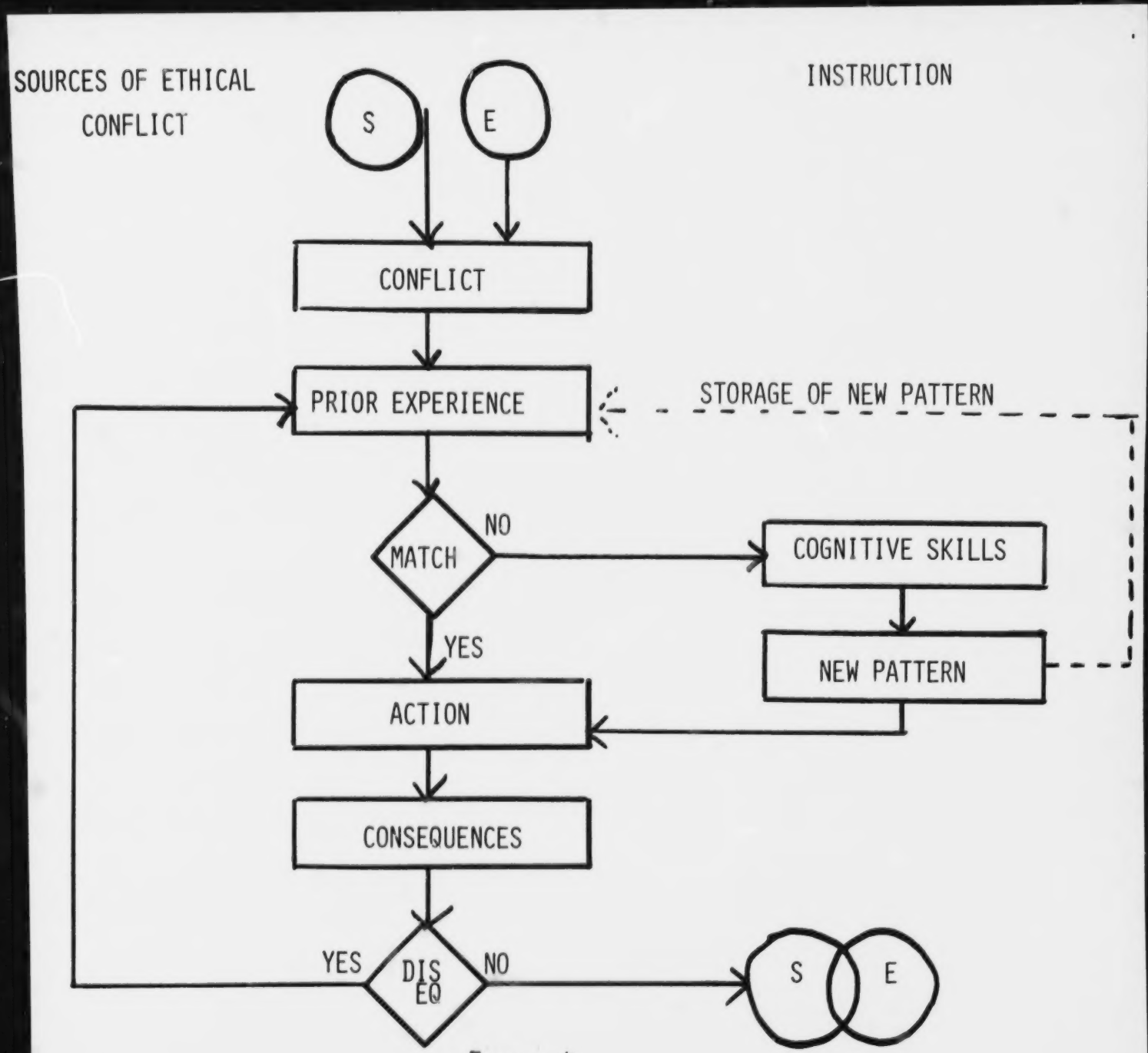

SOURCES OF ETHICAL CONFLICT
S
E
INSTRUCTION
CONFLICT
PRIOR EXPERIENCE
STORAGE OF NEW PATTERN
MATCH
NO
YES
COGNITIVE SKILLS
NEW PATTERN
ACTION
CONSEQUENCES
YES
DIS EQ
NO
S
E

FIGURE 4

between self and environment. Should the previously learned response be adaptive in the new situation, i.e., harmony is restored, the previously learned response will be reinforced and thus maintained within the student's behavioral repertoire.

If the action based upon prior experience does not reestablish harmony, the student will consider other previously learned behaviors until a match is obtained and the conflict is resolved or the student perceives that past experience is insufficient to solve the problem in question. Students at Stage 3 experience conflict when faced with competing ethical principles. Stage 3 students are capable of developing a new pattern of responding using the ethical reasoning and conflict resolution skills at their disposal in order to resolve the conflict.

As new response patterns are conceived and implemented, the consequences of the student's actions are evaluated in terms of the ultimate goal of reestablishing a harmonious relationship within self or between self and environment, i.e., equilibrium. Strategies that are perceived by the student to be adaptive are incorporated into prior experience and expand the response options available to the student for responding to similar conflicts in the future.

New strategies that are perceived by the student to lead to continued or increased conflict, i.e., disequilibrium, within self or between self and environment are also incorporated into the student's prior experience but do not expand the individual's response options. In this case, the student must either search for a more adaptive previously learned response or develop and evaluate another new pattern of responding.

The indirect approach can "teach" students to use ethical reasoning and conflict resolution skills as well as promote the basic values by example. In this model, students can observe conflict situations but must interpret the ethical question of interest for themselves and deduce the skills being used to resolve the conflict with little outside intervention. The degree to which each student is aware of their own personal attitudes, beliefs and values, or alters or affirms their personal work ethic when ethical conflicts arise is undeterminable.

Ethical reasoning

Ethical reasoning is contingent upon the development of the following cognitive skills:

1. The ability to identify and understand relationships between and among people, events, objects and ideas.

2. The ability to discriminate between fact and opinion, the real and the fanciful, definition and example, the probable and the possible, the abstract and the concrete.

3. The ability to recognize issues, problems and ambigutiy.

4. The ability to develop and test hypotheses and generalizations.

5. The ability to judge the relevance, completeness and importance of information and data.

6. The ability to determine probabilities, anticipate arguments and infer conclusions from a given data set.

7. The ability to determine alternate actions and judge the appropriateness of each.

Mediation of Ethical Reasoning and Behavior

Ethical reasoning and behavior are mediated by a group of interpersonal competancies that enable an individual to translate ethical reasoning into ethical conduct within the work context. These competancies include assertiveness skills:

1. The ability to make "I want", "I feel", mixed feelings, empathic, confrontative and "I language" statements to others.

2. Awareness and use of assertive body language.

3. Sensitivity to location, timing, intensity, duration, relationships and frequency when making assertive statements.

4. The ability to give and receive both positive and negative feedback.

5. The ability to initiate, maintain and conclude conversations through the use of open-ended questions, self-disclosing statements, restatement, highlighting, and process observation.

6. The ability to set realistic limits on requests on self made by others and to make realistic requests of others.

7. The ability to make "coping" and "realistic rights" self statements.

An additional competancy area involves empathic listening skills :

1. The ability to use active listening skills and make appropriate verbal responses to the feelings and content of verbalizations made by others.

2. The ability to recognize messages coveyed through facial expressions and body language.

3. The ability to recognize when conflicting messages are conveyed through verbal and body language modalities.

4. The ability to respond via appropriate verbal and body language modalities in such a way as to promote interpersonal understanding.

5. The ability to expand interpersonal understanding

by intergrating one's persoanl experiences with that of others.

Negotiation skills make up a third interpersonal competancy area:

1. The ability to recognize principled and positional negotiation techniques.

2. The ability to compare and contrast negotiations conducted using positional strategies with those using principled techniques and to recognize the superiority of the principled approach.

3. The ability to recognize the long term benefits of using negotiation techniques to solve problems rather than to simply win positional concessions.

4. The ability to generate alternative solutions to problems for use in negotiation situations.

5. The ability to use information gathering strategies to explore the principles behind the positions in a negotiation situation.

6. The ability to use techniques designed to encourage positional negotiators to use principled negotiation strategies.

Risktaking skills comprise the final interpersonal competancy area:

1. The ability to understand one's own value hierarchy.

2. The ability to estimate one's chance of success or failure relative to a number of courses of action that involve risk.

3. The ability to understand the influence of deprivation and oversufficiency in relationship to one's personal values and its resultant effect upon one's risktaking behavior.

4. The ability to understand and predict the consequences of success or failure when selecting among variety of possible actions involving risk.

5. The ability to understand the influence of ones' attributions of the cause of one's failures and successes in the past on future risktaking behaviors.

6. The ability to understand expected outcomes of zero-sum and non-zero-sum interactions and activities on risktaking behavior.

7. The ability to understand the phenomenon of the "risky shift" in making group decisions involving risk.